BLACKWELL'S ISLAND.

A Herald Reporter Sent Up for Thirty Days.

Practical Experience of the Life of "Small Offenders."

SORROWFUL PICTURES.

Lively Scenes at the Tombs and in the Black Maria.

Humanity Degraded and Civilization Outraged.

CITIZEN VERSUS PRISONER.

Brutality of Keepers and Abuse of Inmates.

The Reporter as a Groom of the Stables.

CUDGEL RULE

Horrible Sanitary Arrangements and Cbseenity in the Cells.

Now for Reforms and Changes by the Charity Commissioners.

"You are committed to the Workhouse for

thirty days. The above judgment was passed with laconic brevity on about as rough and unkempt looking an individual as can well be conceived, even at the prisoners' bar of a New York police court. Strange to say the candidate for prison honors did not whine out any piteous appeal to the Judge for leniency. He quietly bid the Judge good morning, and turned away at once to tollow the officer, whose duty it was to conduct him down states to the large cell in which the prisoners await the coming or the vehicle known as the "Black Maria." which conveys them to the Blackwell's Island steamboat dock, at the root of fwenty-sixth street. The scene was laid in the lefferson Market Police Court, the magistrate on the bench was Judge Bixby, and the committed prisoner was the writer of this story. Scarcely had the bolt of the door been shot after I had entered the cell before I began to reflect on the contrariety of things in general. Here were some dozen or more men and lade, who had slipped behind prison bars with a facility which must have been excessively anaoying to them, while I had only succeeded in bining them after considerable difficulty and much time spent in making arrangements. Being legirous of learning something of the restities of prison life on Blackwell's Island I was actually mpelled to take the Hon. Isaac H. Bailey, the President of the Board of Commissioners of Charties and Correction, and Judge Bixby into my confidence and to secure their co-operation in a little plot by which I could enjoy a short temporary seclusion at the country west of the denizens of the kingdom of vice and crime without positively committing any offence. But, thanks to Mr. Bailey, was entered more than hear his into my enterprise, everything went well, and I was at

I found that, with the exception of three lads, who had been arrested for insulting ladies on their return home from church on the street corner the previous evening, all my tellow prisoners were stretched at sull length upon the benones, sleeping sfficers term such cases. One and another would accasionally rouse up when the doorkeeper called his name at the request of an alert individual who seems to earn a living by carrying messages for prisoners to their friends, and, I fancy, in cases where his discretion tells him that he may do so with safety, advancing small sums of money, at a high rate of interest, to prisoners to enable them to make up their fines and thus escape going up on the Island. I suppose such harpies are useful in their way. During the hour or two we were awaiting our despatch to the Island two of boys and one or two of the men were released, to their infinite lov and to the envy of all the others. They all faithfully promised to go immediately and see this person and that person on pehalf of those they left behind. Whether or not they kept their words I am unable to say, for the strival of the Black Maria stopped all such efforts to avoid incarceration. By the way,

last in the clutches of the iaw, "as nice as nine-

ON GLANCING ABOUND THE CELL

pence," as the old saying has it.

THE BLACK MARIA is a pure blonde in color, being painted a cream de. It is a sort of sheet iron box on wheels, and, I should judge, is about eight feet long and four lest wide. Into this box we were all crowded-nine men and four women-and away We went rattling and joiting over the stones, as I to the steamboat dock. I was wrong. On the door being opened for to get out I found, to my profound actonishment, that we were in the in-ner courtyard of the Tomba. We wereprisoners-immediately hurried into a cell without a stick of anything in it, and were shortly afterward reinforced, a German collage projessor of languages being among the new arrivals. In a neighboring call a half-sopered female was giving vent to her grief over her mistortune and mosning and groaning in a heartrending lashlon. I recalle | old Dr. Watts' line :-

Hark! from the fomor a doleful sound.

This same un ortunate lady afterward occupied a seat on my lap during the j urney from the Tombs to Twenty-sixth street, and it was as much as I sould do to prevent her assuaging her grief by pacting ner arm around my neck and kissing me Before leaving the Tombs each prisoner had to wish up to the clerk's desk and state his name. age, birthouce, occupation, whether married or ingle, how many calleren living, how long in this country, where he landed, &c. To all of these inquiries I made repiles at variance with the truth. and I think all those not known to the police did much the same. Where, then, is the value a record? On our second trip the Black dorin we had fliteen inside passengers all told-eleven "ladies" and four "gentlemen. How on earth they managed to cram us all in I don't know. We were literally packed like sarwas great difficulty in getting out the first one. I shall not soon forget that ride. The horrible mix ture of odors arising from the foul stomachs of my feliow travellers was fearful, accompanied, as it was, by that of the procuse perspiration reaking from every pere of their fevered skins. The atbecame intolorable-simost asphymiating; and I vertisoly believe that had sur journey lasted ten minutes longer I must have tainted. I did not recover from the names in inced by it until I had been for some time in the resh air of Blackweil's Island. That ride in the Block Maria gave me some conception of the northe hold of a slaver of half a century ago. I was rather surprised to see so many more women that men in the party; but then, as the waiget franchises remarked test Les firmmes.

copes com, cost comme les pommes de terre;

THE "LADIES" OF OUR PARTY were all, apparently, of that stripe so sptly de-

acribed by Dryden in the line, Then hasten to be drunk-the business of the day. There was a general comperison of notes as to their respective sentences when they were up on the Island last, waat Judge committed them and other interesting topics of a kindred character. Though the men were all as silent and grave as an undertaker at a funeral the women, with the exception of the fair occupant of my lap. laughed, coattered and sung all the way, the grossest indepency and profanity flowing from their lips without restraint. At the steamboat dock we were put into a sort of lockup, which was already occupied by some ten or a dozen prisoners, including two soldiers from Governor's Island. What studies for the brush of an artist many of them presented! A true lover of his profession would have been in his glory, and would have remarked-as did the Irish medical lecturer on enteritis during the great cholera season to his audience— "Fortunately there is no lack of subjects for illustration." There was our college professor, in glossy black frockcoat and trousers, black silk waistcoat and chimney-pot hat, sitting side by side by a bundle of tatters and wretchedness who was bustly occupied in searching ont and destroying the vernith which infested him; an operation greatly meditated by his "looped and windowed raggedness." A dissipated looking young clerk was joking over his fate with a canaller and a stableman, while I, the disguised traud, hobnobbed with the two soldiers. Two of the worst-visaged I ever saw sat apart and cursed their luck and the Judge who had committed them. They were companions in crime evidently, or, as Byron puts it, in "Don Juan," "areades ambo-id est, blackguards both." The face of each of them fully came up to the mark of Addison's epigram on a rogue, which concludes with the following com-

prehensive summing up:-With all these tokens of a knave complete, Should'st thou be honest mou'rt a devilish cheat. I never saw two men with thief so plainly written in every lineament. A young English sailor, who ought to have sailed in one of the Liverpool steamers the previous Saturday, declared that one of them had robbed him of some small change even in the sacred precincts of the Tombs. I pitted this sailor. He was a fin young fellow, had a frank face and winnin dedress and made the best he could of his pos. 3. All he knew about himself was the fact that he wore up on Saturday morning in the station house. He had no recollection of being taken there and seemed to tancy he had been dragged. as he assured me he was not given to getting drunk. It seems to me that his was a case where magisterial leniency would have done As it is he will, he says, doubtedly lose his ship; and yet when the boat at last arrived, and we were marchel on board, the sanor was the only cheerful one of the party. We were not allowed to remain on deck during the passage to the Island, but were all imprisoned in the forecastle and made secure by the padlocking of a heavy fron grating, which was shut down over the batchway. A few minutes later our numbers were reinforced by the arrival of another batch of prisoners, and as soon as the grating was once more secured the boat left the deck. On reaching the landing place of the Island we were called up from below, placed in double file, the soldiers leading the way, and marched off immediately to prison. I just had time to say, sotto roce, to a member of the HERALD staff, who was waiting to see it all had gone well, "Come over again to-morrow morning," and then, aloud, "Don't know nothing about the boat going back, ain't much acquainted here, sir," before started. Two minutes afterward we stood

INSIDE THE PRISON WALLS. We were first of all conducted Into a side office. where our names, &c., were called over. I was asked the same questions waich had been put to me at the Tomos by a cock-eyed, deformed little dwarf, who leering.y marked that I was a fine-looking man, and complimented me on the apparent muscular power of my forearm. I felt like strangling the little monster. These preliminaries being over we were marched into a large cell on the first tier, aiready half full of prisoners, the accession of our party raising the number in the cell to forty-three. It was an awfol crowd; a chewing, smoking, spitting, noisy, cursing, restless crowd, just such an assemblage as may be seen in the waiting room of a railroad depot on a cold spring morning waiting for the permission to enter the cars of the special train which is to convey them to the ground of a forthcoming bloody encounter in the prize ring. Every one was asking every one the length of the term of his sentence, who had sentenced him and how it all happened. Strange to say, all seemed were of many nationalities and all ages. The Tenton and the Celt, the Christian and the Jew, the lad of fifteen and the old man or seventy, were all huddled together in this noisy, disgusting congre-

gation of degraded humanity.

DONNING THE UNIFORM. After baif an hour's delay we were all called out and marched to the Superintendent's office for a sort of alternoon parade and inspection, and then a butch of us, including myself, were ordered off to what turned out to be the prison dressing room and barber's abop. Here I encountered the first of the really serious unpleasantness of my novel situation. We were taken in charge by an officer and two prisoners, who act as his aides. It is strange, but only too true, that prisoners when drest in a little brief authority" are always harsh to their fellow prisoners. The two men in question were certainly no exception to the rule. One was a far, greasy fellow, with a lond voice and laugh, and evidently enjoyed the work he had in band; the other was more lightly built, bright looking and active, but with a decidedly failbird. air about him generally. Burke, the fat one, rupped his hands electuity, and said :- "Nos then, all of you jump out of your clothes, and put on these nice clean ones." My heart sank within me as my eyes fell on the prison uniform, for more reasons than one. I know that all prisoners were not compelled to change their ciothes, and I particularly objected to parting with mine. I therefore appealed to the officer in a very hourse tone of voice, told him that I had a severe cold, was suffering from Bright's disease and other complaints, and that if I caught fresh cold it would probably be the last of me. He replied curtiv and coldly that I must but on the prison uniform, and that without delar. When my suit was handed to me I remonstrated in earnest, for I was now really alarmed. I found it only comprised a pair of trousers, a common blue and waite striped shirt and a round jacket like a schoolboy's jacket. Neither undershirt, Grawers nor vest was provided, nor were those who had such articles of apparel allowed to retain them, no matter how clean they might have been. this is wrong. After a drunken dehench the blood is so feverish that the statem almost invites a cold, and yet prisoners are brought from the warm city and are turned out to face the bigh and frequently cutting winds of Blackwell's Island siter they have been deprived of just that portion of their clothing which is most serviceable in enabling them to resist the ill effects of so sudden a change. I saw prisoners thus deprived of the beaviest fannal derelesting, which they had been wearing all the winter. In the Penitentiary those prisoners who have underelocating are allowed to wear it, and, surely, a privilege which is granted to a thief should not be denied to a man woo has hed "the istortune" to get drunk. The Penitentiary prisoners, too, have heavy weather; the Workhouse prisopers have nothing but their jackets. All my remonstrances, however, were unavailing. Mr. Burke remarked that prisoners could not be enqueers that he pimself had to wear the samclothing, and, finally, requested me to get out of my clothes, 'and look sharp about it." There was no hope for i, and I slowly began to disrobe, A gream of light came. The trousers formened ne would not and could not be made to ment

Mr. Burre said they had no more large sized

pairs to give out, and, very ungraciously, said he

supposed I must west my own. I had them on in

called him-made for mesavagely, and demanded, with an oath, to know why I and put on my own trousers again. I explained. "See here, now," he rejoined, "you've got to come out of pants, even if you have to go about without any," He rummaged among the clothing, and, tossing a pair of tronsers to Burke, told num to "ge him into 'em, somehow or other." As I stood up the waistband would not meet by two inches. But the gening of Mr Barko was count to the OCcasion. He is evidently a student of Charles Dickens, and has read Sam Weller's story of how the boy at last robbed the old gentleman with the gentleman being in the hapit of amusing himself by standing and looking into picture shops, &c., and allowing the street thieves to tug away at his watch guard, knowing that his waistband was 100 tight to allow of the watch being drawn out. After one or two futile efforts to make the waistband of my prison trousers meet, Mr. Burke drew back, and, exclaiming, "l'il teach you to swell belly out like that," struck me a your with his fist in the diaphragm. The effect was immediate and magical. When I recovered from the momentary shock I found, to my surprise, that the top button was fastened and that Mr. Burke's nimble fingers were quickly running down the others. I explained to him that the trousers were so tight that I felt as though I were in a strait-waistcoat. He gave a sort of hyena grin as he replied, Never mind, they'll be a damned sight too big for you inside of a week." Mr. Burke's sagacity was not at fault. The trousers stretched and I shrank, and be ore I finally discarded those tronsers they were really too large for me. But, then, I lost exactly six pounds in weight during my few days' voluntary incarceration—that is, according to the scales of the St. Nicpolas Rotel. Fully arrayed in the prison uniform I waited anxiously to see what they would do with me clothes, Fortunately, though not worth five cents, I knew they were clean, as their impoverished appearance was not the result Still it was possible that Mr. Burke of wear. might not give them a chance, but send them off to the "vermin house" with the clothing of the dirty prisoners. He pronounced them clean, however, and they were tied in a bundle and carried up stairs. On, Mr. Burke! On, Mr. James McDonouga! could you have only known that I had a ten dollar bill sewed in each teg of those trousers, how happy you would have been! Can you be surprised, then, at my anxiety to keep them out of your clutches? But circumstances spared you the temptation. You did not dream of the small mine of wealth contained in that shabby old garment, and you have one sin the less to answer for. I had, moreover, two dollars in small change in my right sock, three single dollar bills my left sock, and some single and small change rolled in folds of my faded old neckbandkerchief. Do you not think, gentlemen, that, had you been aware of these matters, you would have seen that I had a private dressing room, with no eyes to watchyou while engaged in dressing me? I think that I should never have had two such willing va ets. Only two men of the party interested methe sallor of whom I have already spoken, and an elderly man, who seemed terribly downcast at finding himself in prison. The latter bewaited his fate, and spoke of himself with a mixture of bitterness and pity. It was evident that he had seen Indeed, he told me as much; but said that after the death of his wife, two years age, he had unfortunately sought com ort for his sorrows in the cup. His business had slipped away from him, his friends had deserted him, and his present position was the climax of his troubles. The tears came into his eyes as he spoke of his happier days, and his griet for his degradation seemed to be deep and sincere. Ah, Dante! how

true are your words :-Nessun maggior dolore Che ricordarsi del tempo felica Nella miseria. NOTHING WITHOUT LABOR.

I had been warned by Mr. Bailey that the prison authorities would put me to work, and that it would spitable to my powers. Therefore, when I had been asked in what way I had been in the habit of earning a living. I had replied that I was a carriage driver. This enabled the comparative whiteness and sottness of my hands to pass muster. On leaving the dressing room, then, I, in company staples, which are located about bull a mile away from the prison. On my way I had my first insight into the brutalities of prison life. Some distance to the right of us were gangs of men working in the fields. One of the prisoners was apparently loaflog over his work, and a keeper, or boss, swung a caugel slott and brought it down with such force on the poor iellow's spoulder that I thought the blow must have broken his collar bone. The man had no chance of dodging the cudget, for he had his back turned ing discharged before their time was up. They to the keeper at the moment he was struck. Now. we all know that the class of men who are sent up to the Island can be and undoubtedly are very ugiy in their temper at times, but there are punishment rules in vogue, and I think it should have been the daty of the keeper to report the man if savage fashion he did. I know from personal acquaintance that there are no two kinder hearted men in the world than Mr. Isaac H. Bailey and Mr. Thomas Brennan; no two men more desirous of conscientiously managing the vast interests committed to their charge, and I feel convinced that such conduct on the part of keepers would not be tolerated Unfortunately, those things moment. are never done when they are around; they are, therefore, in ignorance of their over being done, and if a prisoner were to make a complaint the keepers would all stand by one another and swear that he was lying. The second day I was in the prison a Penitentiary man came down to the stables for some drinking water for his gang. He had been struck on the need by his reeper the day before a blow so severe that it is a wonder that his skull was not fractured. A large space on the side of the poor fellow's head was shaven and pinstered up. He assured me that he had committed a most trivial fault. Such treatment will change the most docile into the most refractors prisoner in a very short time, and is doubtless sometimes the cause of the murderous attacks on keepers of which we read from time to time. The Commissioners ought to, and doubtless will, enact some very stringent regulations against striking prisoners, now that the matter has been brought to their notice.

A MEMBER OF THE STABLE GANG. I was duly installed as one of the "stable gang," and far from relished the general demeanor tone of voice of our "boss" before I had been naif an hour under his orders. He appears to camiliarly addressed as "Joe" by his brother geopers, and to rejoice in the surname of Cam-Well, I have no hesitation in saving that Mr. Cummings is about the surfiest, sulkiest specimen of humanity with whom it has ever fallen to my lot to be associated. Every prisoner in the gang warned me that he was an "ugly cuss;" and I can testify that I did not hear him ever address any of us otherwise than it we had been so many vicious mules the whole time I was in his charge. Mr. Commines has evidently adopted Aaron Hib's very much mistaken theory as to the treatment of those over whom circumstances empower him to excercise petty tyrangy:-

Tis the same with common natures
the lem kindly, they rebei:
But by rough as untmog grades,
and the rough as untmog grades.
And the rough as offer Mr. Cummings some

sort of respectiul salutation, but all chance of my doing so was killed by his muttering surlily between his teeth, the very moment we reached the stable door, "Now, you big fellow, go and help them men mix that cut eed." I went through the socil process, withdrew inside my shell of re cerve and obered his instructions, carrying the feed when mixed, and distributing it in the gers. H: watched me with a cruel look in hiseye, as though waiting the slightest opportunity to hand me over the coars. I took pleasure in noticing that his disappointment at my not doing any. thing wrong made him puff very vigorously at the dirty clay pipe he had in his mouth and so ar. hand his tobacco prematurely; at the same time I made a mental photograph of my friend. After having carried around the feed, I was ordered to

sweep up the yard and do other things. Pizally, at six o'clock, the boss dismissed us with a sulky motion of the head, and we all started for the

SUPPER. On reaching the hall we were marshalled into the prison dining room, where all the other pris oners were already seated at supper. I was by this time juriously nungry, having eaten nothing since my early breakfast before going to the police court: the law, in whose power I was, having furnished me no lood and preventing me from obtaining any on my own account. Our supper consisted solely of a large tin dish of corn meal mush, with a spoonful of molasses daobed in the middle. I am not partial to mush-it is by no means an epicurean dish-but I should prenounce the mush in question very fair in quality. The molasses was nasty, having a strong flavor of paregoric. As soon as we had fluished our supper we were marched off to the cells, and a few minutes later the bolts were shot and we were all locked in for the night. For the moment it was quite a relief to me to be quietly sitting on one of the hammocks after the excitements and novel situations of the day; but I soon became restless, and at once busied myself in becoming better acquainted with my fellow prisoners and in an inspection of my quarters.

So far as I could judge by pacing the cell it was about 25 feet by 16, with three strongly barred windows facing the west and a grated iron door in the eastern wall. The cell contained twelve hammocks, that is, a piece of canvas laced with cord on to a light iron framework. There were six upper and six lower hammocks, like the berths in a ship. I was provided with a straw pollow without a case and two army blankets, and I am bound to say that I could not complain of them; neither did I experience any practical evidence of the presence of bedbugs or other vermin so long as I remained in the prison.

BUT THE SANITARY ABRANGEMENTS are barbarous in their primitiveness and disgraceful to any prison in these days of boasted civilization. The only provision for the twelve prisoners in my cell consisted of three common house pails with some lime in them. The consequence was that by nine o'clock in the evening had three miniature open cesspools to poison My companions the atmosphere of the cell. tormed a motley group, and I sat for some time on the nammock studying the most noteworthy of them. They one and all removed their boots and socks (when they had the latter). Some even took off their trousers. I was thunderstruck. With one exception their feet were coated with greasy black dirt, and in many cases, their legs were grimy to a negree, even above the knees. I am surprised that the keepers do not make prisoners take a bath when they are brought in. The Commissioners have a regulation that every pri-oner shall take a bata on his arrival, but the lazy keepers disregard it.

The first I took note of was a little, half-witted, fearially dirty specimen of humanity, with a deformed toot and ankle, which gave a crab-like movement to his locomotion. He had managed to get hold of one of the prison loaves of bread, and spent the first half of the night in slowly munening it away. He was the butt for all the slangy wit of the party, and had been satirically nicknamed "Pocahontas."

Another was a very dwarfsh individual, with a humped back, who rejoiced in the sobriquet of "smorty." He was very lively, fond or singing sentimental songs, and seemed to be a favorite. A third was an Irishman, who had arrived in company with myself; a tall, powerfully built, jolir, good-numered and good-natured tellow of about fity-five years of age, and with an immense shock head of silver gray hair. As he assumed to know something of the ways of the place I was emboldened to ask him if he had stayed in that hotel before. He laughed heartly and replied, "Be dad! an' its only last Wednesday as I went out." He told me that he had left the prison with ninety cents in his pocket; had entered a liquor saloon on Twentysixth street on leaving the I-land steamboat, and had there and then got drunk on his ninety cents. The following day (Thursday) he had earned a dollar by hanling coal in the same neighborhood; had got drunk on that dollar on Friday; had been arrested in the evening, and committed for ten days on Saturday morning. They called him "Haver-

straw," from the fact of his sometimes working in the brick , ards of that village. Then there was a young English Jew, who was always addressed as "Sheeny." He had a feir partione voice, and regarded himself as a second Graziani. Perhaps the most entertaining of the unmar was a regular New York boy, about nine. teen or twenty years of age, very great at breakdowns and mimicry, full of stories and advantures, and apparently knowing as much of wild life as most men of thirty; and, perhaps, I may characterize myself as one of the notethe slightest suspicion of my identity. I was ouiged to fabricate a history of myself to satisfy the yearning curiosity of my companions. I told them that I had been drinking hard all the winter; that I had asked my folks to have me home, but that they had refused to do so till I got straightened up a bit; that feeling such a devoutly to be wished consummation was hopeless of accomplishment if I remained in New York had asked Judge Sixby to let me come up on the Island for a week, and that that stern dispenser of justice had ruthlessly committed me for a month, to my infinite disgust. This last announce ment procured me the general sympathy, and brought down loud and deep curses on "that brute, B:xoy." I beg here to offer my humble anology to the Judge for thus taking his name in vain; but I think he will be the first to admit that I could hardly help myself.

"Weil," said one, "I guess it'll be a warnin' to you to give up rum. I never mean to touch a drop again after I get out this time." I was surprised to hear expressions of a deter mination to reform on all sides. I fear that in most of the cases the good resolutions are likely to vanish in the atmosphere of New York. Rape lais said truly when he wrote :-

"The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be; the devil was well, the devil a monk was he." The first evening passed away quietly amid a glowing sunset. The new prisoners were not very cheerful, and had the remains of their morning's headache to keep them quiet; the old ones were auxious to learn the stories of the new comers ask what was going on in the city, and inquire after possible mutual acquaintances. Before sky I was the only one not in his hammook and the only one not asleep, with the exception of "Pocahontas," wno lay silently munching his loaf of oread. I stood gazing out of the window into that busy world which I had voluntarily abandoned, and for the life of me I could not help reeling half-saddened. I thought of my home and its comjorts and compared them with my present surroundings, and felt

In such a frame of mind I mounted on to my hammock, the upper one, and, lying down, threw a blanket over myseif, not with the idea of sleet ing, but simply because I was tired of pacing up and down the cell. I had, indeed, very little hope of sleep that night; and as I glanced around at my sleeping fellow prisoners I could truly say. with Louis Onze-

Ah! I'heuraux miserable! un doux sommeli l'attend. Il va dornir; et moi

SANITARY HORRORS. By this time the atmosphere of the cell began to cause me considerable discomfort. in the firs place there were the three small open cespools in the cell, the foul stench from wulch increased every moment; then there was the exhalation from the bodies of eleven excessively duty men. and agreep, 100. With these outer was mixed no the state furnes of all the firthily bad plug tobacco which had been smozed during the evening; and the peaviness of the atmosphere was still jurther intensified by the unnecessary beat from the steam pipes. An open window was out of the question, on account or the position of the grated door leading on to the main corridor of the prison. faces sleeping by the window could not or would not stand the draugut. In time, I began to doze unessily, dreaming all the while, first of one thing,

prison. Then came a fearful nightmare that some | matter told me that it was, as far as they knew. one was trying to murder me by strangulation. I swoke with a yell and was unable, at first, to determine where I was. But the inquiry, "Wnat's the matter, old man ?" from the occupant of the below, quickly recalled me to the realities of the situation.

"I am nearly suffocating," I replied; "this hor rible atmosphere is poisoning me."

The man gave a long sigh and said, "I've had two months of it. It's the pans. Only fancy what it would be to any one coming in out of the fresh air. It'd really knock 'em down.'

But this tearful atmosphere not only poisoned my lungs but my stomach. I became so nauscated that I feared I should soon be seriously ill, and weary and tired as I was. I left my nammock and made my way to the door. For the best part of three hours, I judge, I remained with my face pressed against the grating of the door, so as to inhale the comparatively pure atmosphere of the corridor, and I only then returned to my hammock because I was worn out.

PRESH AIR AND PRESH WATER. Gradually the day crept in upon us, far too

slowly for my impatience; but at last, about five O'clock, the cell door was opened and we were at liberty to go to the washing room. One half of the tans in the washing room will not run at all and nearly all the others only send forth a trickle of water. This, without soap, is not conducive to the sort of "rinse" Sam Weller was wont to revel in: and the jack towels which do duty all round are soon wetted and very dirty. The prison regulations order all prisoners to go to the wasaroom. Many do not go, and the lazy keepers do not trouble themselves to compel tuem to do so. In such condition was I left by my night in the cell that I was upable to attack the hunch of bread provided for my breakfast. I tasted the coffee. There was plenty of it, but it was very weak, and served without milk. Now case noir is very nice after dinner, especially with a gloria in it: but at five o'clock in the morning, and without the gloria, it is a decided failure. I took the precaution, however, of secreting half my bread under my jacket, knowing I should get hangry after having been in the iresh air awhile. The remainder I turned over to the greedy maw of "Pocshontas," We went direct from the breakfast hall to the stables, On our getting outside the building one of the prisoners called my attention to his lip, which was bleeding from "a smack in the mouth," as he termed it, given him by one of the keepers whose toe he had accidentally trodden upon in passing out of the door.

In a few moments the fresh air began to revive me. It was as lovely a spring morning as I can call to remembrance, and before we reached the stables "my lungs began to crow like chanticleer," as the melancholy Jacques has 1r. Our boss was not on hand, but our prisoner-foreman quickly set us all to work. I had three horses to groom, their beds to rake out and their stalls to sweep, I had also to help harness and hitch up teams and then to sweep the stable yard.

By the time I had finished these jobs the boss put in his appearance, with his invariable dirty clay pipe in his mouth. He looked even more surly than on the provious day, and, as luck would have it, he caught me doing nothing. He gave me a wicked look. "Can't you find something to do?" inquired, sarcastically; and then he quickly added, "Come along with me. I'll fix you, damn you," Air. Cammings set me to work wheeling fine mould for his small flower patch and then some heavy turi sods to make a new verge round it. He would not allow me to carry a fair and moderate load, but seized the shovel and piled the wheelbarrow, which was large one, till it would hold no more, saying, with a malicious sneer as he did so, "We'll sweat some o' that rum out of you before we're through." Strong man as I am I almost staggered under the heavy loads he made me wheel, and my cibows and wrists trembled with the jarring strain on them. Any one who knows anything of gardening knows that fine black mould is very heavy wheeling. But what did Mr. Cummings care? Well, yes, he did care a good deal. He enjoyed the sight, for he had evidently taken a dishas to me at first sight. I thank him for the compliment. Cutting hay for feed, until ching teams, &c., carried me on till dinner time-twelve o'clock.

THE DINNER. For dinner we had a tin dish of very thin but not otherwise bad soup, a hunch of bread, rather sour, and some lumps of meat, the sight of which was quite enough for me. With regard to the bread, this was the only occasion while I was in the prison on which I could complain of it. It varied a little from meal to meal; but, generally speaking, it was very fair bread and was well baked. The meat may have been fresh and tender, but it was shamefully cooked and cut and repoliting to the eye. On leaving the dining hall I found many of the prisoners lounging outside the ng and carrying on a warfare of slang and ribaldry with some of the semale prisoners who were hanging out clothes to ary. There was no double entendre. The indecency was as plain and as ontspoken as car be conceived, and was thoroughly garnished with prolanity. To my surprise and disgust some beeners stood listening and laughing and made no attempt to put a stop to so disgracetul a scene. which must have lasted eight or ten minutes. We had a good loaf all round at the stables that after-

CUMMINGS AND HIS PETS.

Mr. Cummings was absent from his post till about three o'clock, and when he and his dirty clay pipe did appear it was evident that he was in one of his sulklast tempers. Where he had been or want he had been doing I cannot say; but he was very hot and flushed and his nose shone like the red buil's eye of a ratiroad signal man's lamp. Mind, we were all loafing together; but Mr. Cum mings pounced at once upon me. "Say, didn't I set you cutting hay?" he demanded in his surjest tone. "No," I replied.

"I didn't, eh ?" he rejoined, as his eyes gleamed wickedly at me. I explained to him that he could not have done so, as I had not seen him since dinner. This thrust was more than he could stand. He yelled out, "Go and cut bay, God damn you!" and sprang towards me. But I was too sharp for him, the stairway into the nay loft was at my elbow, and Helt Mr. Commings to matter himself out by himself. Had he only known that I had been away from the stable during his absence and had had a quiet chat with the gentleman from the MERALD, who had come over to see how was getting on, his wrath against me would have known no bounds. The following day he set me to work "fixing up" tue roadway in front of his cottage. In strange contrast with this man's behavior to the prisoners was that of a keeper of a gang penitentiary men who were breaking stones near the stables. When he spoke to his prisoners it was in a kindly and encouraging tone, and any one could see that he was a favorite with them. In fact, those who came to the stables for drinking water told me that they were all glad to obey him because he was kind to them. So much for the advantage of leading by a silken cord rather than driving with a knotted scourge. "OH, YOU'VE SKINNED IT."

On one occasion, at dinner, on sitting down at our table at the jurther end of the room, there were three dishes of meat wanting. One of the prisoners called out to the distributor to notify him of this fact and to request that he would make the deficiency good. "On, you've skinned it." was the suriy and only reply-meaning that they had concessed it for the purpose of obtaining a second ration. Two poor fellows had, couse quently, to go without their meat; the third had mine. I once or twice saw a keeper, the only one who appeared to me to be good-natured, give out an extra ration, but it was quite exceptional, Those of the stable gang, who drove the teams around to the Charity Rospital, Lunatic Asylum. almshoraes &c., Would often ue: a loaf of pread a nice bit of cold mutton, a ping of tobacco or other little luxuries. The old men at the almshouse, too, are often willing to seil their allowance of tobacco at less than its market value. I was several times asked by them if I wanted any smoging or chewing tobacco, when passing to and from work. But of whiskey I absolutely saw or heard nothing all the time I was in the Workhouse. I tried all I could to pay some, just to see if it was possible. But it seemed impossible, and the two or tures old brisoners whom I espenised on the

hopeless.
ENTERTAINMENTS A LA MODE. The night before I left the prison we had quite a little entertainment in our cell. Our mimic gave some excellent representations of Dutch and Irish character, a man named "Jim" danced a capital breakdown; "Sheeny," "Shorty" and I contributed the vocal part, and "Pocabontas," straw" and the others were the enthusiastic au dience. "Shorty" sang "Goodby, Sweetheart, Goodby" and "Snades of Evening Close Not O'er "Sneeny" sang one sentimental and two comic songs, the burden of which I cannot recall, and I lavored the company with the tollowing original composition, which came in very appropriately, under the circumstanses:-

When other arrings and other smiles
Their tales next mornishall tell
In angulal whose excess naught wites—
When bloodshot eyes thall 'ware the flask,
At such an hour, you'll see
That one nure draught is all you'll ask
When you remember me. when the crementer me.

When limiams or the gout shall blight
That beauty now you prize
And make it a degraded sight—
A beam in plous eyes.
There may, berhaps, 'mid iev'rish dreams,
Some recollection be
Of drinks that flow from purer streams,
And you'll remember me.

This parody on Mr. Balfe's well known song ta the "Bohemian Girl" brought down the house. The next instant the stentorian voice of the night watchman was heard, demanding to know what was the meaning of all that noise in \$2-the number of our cell. It was after eight o'clock, at which hour all talking is supposed to cease. We were as quiet as mice in a moment, and crept quickly under our blangers. In a quarter of an our all were sound asleep, and a concert of another and more discordant character was soon in full blast. But I could not sleep. The atmosphere was rapidly becoming very font again, although not quite so bad as usual, as the steam had been turned off. About nine o'clock I was aroused by a shout outside the building, followed by more shouting. I sprang from my hammock, and saw men running up and down the river bank, under the prison windows, with a lantern. "THERE IS AN ESCAPE,"

I cried. In a moment all were crowded at the open windows, and a terrible scene was enacted not before our eyes, for the moon was not yet up and we could see nothing, but, what was equally horrible, in our hearing. A poor fellow, under sentence for one year, had managed to get locked out of the prison, and was at the moment battling for his life against the stream in the middle of the river. He had evidently a triend waiting for him at the foot of the rocks on the other side, for . voice could be continually heard shouting:-

"Keep up, old man; for God's sake keep you head up, and don't let any water get in your And thes month. Here's a boat acoming." the man on the bank would shout wildly "Come, hurry up that bont." All this while we could hear the cries of the man in the water who had either got cramped or frightened and was in dire danger of drowning. Scarce a word was spoken in our cell; all held their bated breath, and I could not help muttering a prayer that the poor struggling wretch in the water might succeed in reaching the bank and in escaping. The suspense was norrible. Every moment seemed to be a minute, and it looked as if that boat would never come, and there we stood behind the bars powerless and helpless, worked up to an agony, and most of us trembling with excitement Feebler and leebler grow the cries of the drown. Louder and more frantic grew the shouts of the man on the bank as he encouraged him or sought to hasten the men in the boot On! would that boat never come? THE MAN IS DROWNED.

Yes. It would, and it did come, and the norrible words grated on my very soul as the man on the bank called out to the boatman, "Tuere's where he went down-just where you are now." With a chilled sensation at my heart I crept back inte bed. The others sought their hammocks in silence. They were evidently all greatly shocked Very little was said, and that in a very subdued tone of voice, as though the body was then lying in the cell. I cannot learn that any publicity was given to this poor fellow's death. Very likely his fitends did not know his whereabouts. Very likely his name will be inscribed on the long rol of mysterious disappearances.

The day after this lamentable occurrence I was discharged, after naving served but a very small portion of the term for which I was committed. I was informed of this fact at dinner, and told to go up stairs and get my own clothes, and then go to the dressing room. The little old man who handed me my bundle of clothing seemed to be very grieved over my discharge.

"You'll be drunk to-night for a certainty," he said: "you ought to have stayd ten days at least; it would have been much better for you." I was delighted on untying my bundle of clothes to find the two ten-dollar bills in the legs of my trowsers joined the gentleman from the Harald who had brought over the order for my discharge.

By the way, I have spoken of the keepers striking the prisoners. This gentleman was a witness of an exhibition of brutality of this kind on this very occasion. A German, on coming from the dining room, was ordered off to do certain work of a disagreeable nature. He remonstrated; said he was not a convicted but a vagrant prisoner, and said he would do no such work. Of course, this man was wrong. But what shall we think of the conduct of the keepers? Without another word two of them seized the man by the nape of the neck and ran him along in the direction he ought to go, one striking him several sovere blows on the back of the head and neck as they did so, and finally flinging him away with an injunction to ge was astonished, for this brutal scene was enacted in the most public part of the prison, just inside the main entrance, and when the prisoners were leaving the dining room.

But we hastened away. I had seen quite as much as I cared to experience of life on Black-weil's Island. I was furnished with a pass to leave the island; but it was not asked for on board the steamboat nor on landing at Twenty sixth street. I think there must have been some carelessness somewhere about this. On reaching New York I made straight running for a barber's shop, then went nome, took a warm bath and dressed myself in civilized fashion, and then hastened off to the Turkish baths. Not till I had been thoroughly rubbed and scrubbed and sham-pooed did I feel at all sale or comfortable as to possible consequences from having served a short time as a prisoner in the Workhouse on Blackwell's Island.

THE FINANCIAL CRISIS IN PATERSON.

The committee appointed in behalf of the cred itors of the Grant Locomotive Works in Paterson have made a report and suggested a basis of sec tlement. The liabilities of the concern are \$561,641 98; the assets, \$712,651 83; liabilities over assets, \$138,890 15. The synopsis of the proposed basis of settlement is that the bondholders shall consent to satisfy all mortgages and bonds, leaving the property free of enonmbrances; that the more gages and general creditors receive in payment of claims the capital stock (\$800,000) pro rate to the amount of cisims; that the claims

of claims the capital stock (\$300,000) pro rate to the amount of claims; that the claims of all creditors be determined by the report of the receiver; that the certificates of stock be assigned and shrendered to D. B. Grant upon nayment of the par value, without interest; the net profit of the concern to be divided annually among stockholders; if net profits exceed six per cent in the amount of prosent indevicedness a sax per cent dividend to be made; should the profits in any year not amount to sax per cent the deficiency to be paid out of the certings of the next year that exceeds six per cent not profit before any surplus beyond aix per cent the profit before any surplus beyond aix per cent not profit before any surplus beyond aix per cent and to divided among stockholders; a board of five directors to be annually agreed upon to maining the concern, three of whom sand on nominated by the general creditors; Mr. D. S. Grant to be employed as manager of the works at sainty of \$10,000 per annual, as agreeing to assign all interest in patents owned by all an creditors. This is a very important matter for Faterson, the continuance of the establishment being of vital interest to the place. It usually amnoys 600 of 500 nands, most of whom have been idle since the stoppage of the works, and many handred popular cedevourly praying tout the settlement proposed will be agreed upon, so that business may be fasumed. It is said that all the principal creditors are ready to sign the agreement, per quest of the smaller ones object to doing so. Chiefs this ogrement is settled upon it is learned the principal creditors.